

Fall 1901

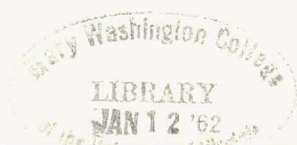
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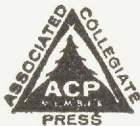
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You would never have noticed it in passing. It was like any other of the numerous little cafes that lined Second Avenue in the city of the Great White Way. The rusting tables covered with worn, checked cloths were scattered over the slightly sagging patio, and the pseudo-French atmosphere was further heightened by ancient wine bottles filled with dripping candles which had been placed haphazardly on the various tables. Somewhere in the back a tired concertina was whining "La Seine," and the air smelled faintly of cheap wine and rich food. It was here that Jean-Bernard worked. Twenty-three years had passed since he had left la Rue Saint Germain, and he'd spent twenty-two of those years taking orders from the customers who frequented this obscure cafe. Some came and were never seen again, but others returned, day after day, to drink the stale wine and stare with unseeing eyes out into the teeming street beyond.

That afternoon had been slow, and as the clock neared five, only three people remained seated on the patio. Two Jean-Bernard knew. The third was a stranger.

The familiar faces belonged to "les deux amants" or at least that was what Jean-Bernard called them. Theirs was an oft-repeated story of love without consent, and so they met each twilight in this random spot. Jean-Bernard had never experienced love: at least not in their sense. Like all men he had loved physically the bodies of many women, but a love of the mind and spirit was something of which he knew nothing. Often he'd found himself watching these two child-like figures as they talked in lowered tones of a world that lay in a time suspended. Their very presence in the cafe lent an air of quiet and seeking joy. Often Jean-Bernard had found cause to brighten their table with perhaps a bunch of small violets plucked from a window box on his way to work. He exalted in seeing their faces brighten with the discovery of this subtle touch of beauty. Theirs was a world he'd never known: a world he wished to explore and discover.

The stranger had entered the cafe late that afternoon. He too was watching "les deux amants," but he watched with an air of superior amusement. His "vetements" were of a vintage popular in years gone by, but the passage of time had worn them to what was a disrespectable shabbiness. The flushed skin and hands that trembled bespoke of an affinity for drink and the stranger was presently satisfying this affinity with a glass of cognac, which he was warming between his hands. His entire countenance gave the impression that he was one who had seen all of life and was still bored. Without removing his eyes from the young people, he slowly raised the glass and drained its contents. Then, still without turning his head, he motioned for Jean-Bernard. The waiter crossed the patio and stopped beside the stranger's table. Without changing his position, the stranger ordered a second cognac, and then, almost as an after-thought, he inquired as to the identity of the two young people. Immediately Jean-Bernard felt a certain distrust, a certain need to protect this wistful thing he had discovered. He could see that the stranger held the same views that he had once thought to be true, so he was not surprised when the stranger spoke.

"They must be merely some silly youngsters who think they are in love. Such foolish whims does youth have! Why see how he strokes her hand and so gently kisses her cheek—all in preparation for destroying her body tonight. Oh well, such is life and such is love."

Jean-Bernard said nothing. He brought the cognac but left the stranger to his thoughts and smirking glances. Pensively the waiter retired and leaned against the fence that enclosed the cafe. He watched the stranger finish the drink, get up, and walk across the patio. As he passed "les deux amants," he sardonically saluted the young lady.

Jean-Bernard watched him saunter down the avenue and disappear around the corner. Suddenly Jean-Bernard felt quite ill. Not physically so, but there was a certain numbness in his mind. He hated the stranger and his all-knowing attitude. Slowly he began to realize that he too had felt that way. That was before he had met "les deux amants." In a brief span of time these two young people had unknowingly touched his life and filled a void which had long lain unfulfilled. Because of them he saw things in a clearer sight. Because of them he had come to know the beauty of a mild May morning, the sharp contrast of concrete angles against the sky, and the softness of a love no cynic can touch. He had learned all of these things, and as he watched the young people leave and walk into the lowering twilight, he thanked them

THE MUSES

Nancy R. Burch '62

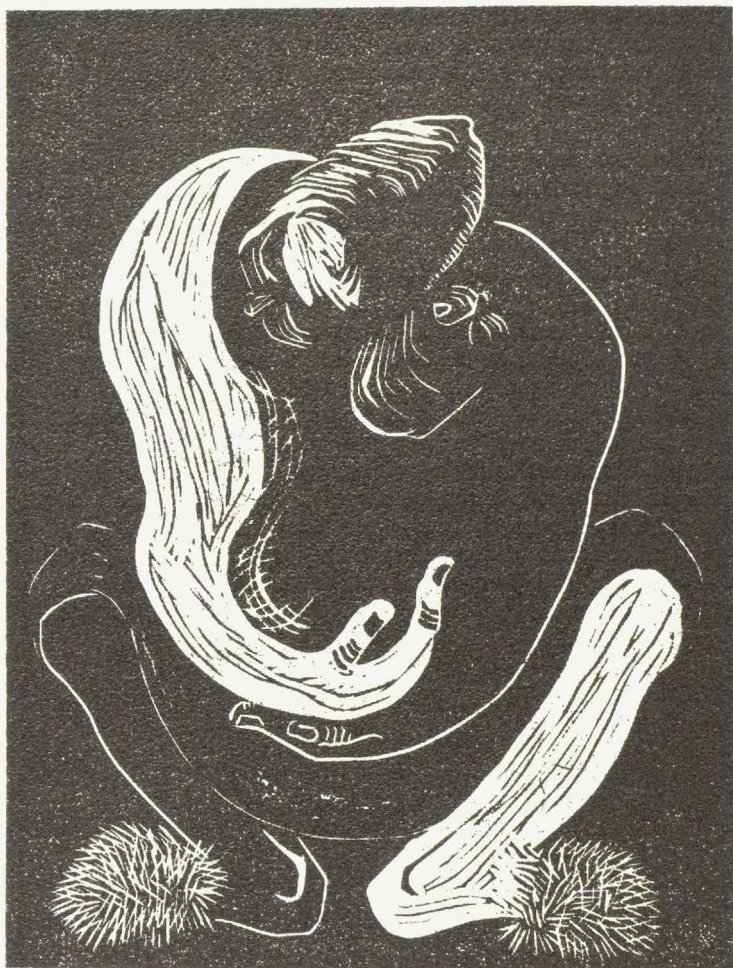
*There are those who live life
and have their art.*

*There are others who know
no such distinction.*

*I see a man playing an old guitar,
and listening to bodies which
bend and sway in yellow fields.*

*I see many men singing as they bend
low in the rice and mud.*

*Man! the star hangs here—
that you play your guitar,
that you look up
and smile to one another.*



Warmth

Karen Gustafsen '63

THE CAMEO

Lori Vink '65

To me the day seems old
 And gazing down a tarnished year
 I see myself again in gold and bronze,
 The Autumn tones,
 And Autumn warmth has wrapped me in its mystery
 And frozen still my form within a cameo
 And this I wear as from another age
 Where time has stopped, and only memory moves
 In muted shades
 And life is not reality.

SONG OF THREE SEASONS

Lori Vink '65

*Of all the memories of Spring
I choose these two to keep;
Green leaf floating all alone
Pussy willow curled and sound
Asleep*

*Out of the abundance of Summer
I take three:
Golden song from a golden sky
Sun-sighing, moon-sighing
wind in the sky
Pale moon poised and
Ready to die.*

*Fall I remember by colors:
Brown for the death of a child
That I love
Orange for a cold wind
To come from above,
Red for the break of a promise.*

LULLABY

Lori Vink '65

*Summer, she's a shiny pearl,
Lullaby, lullaby
Floatin' down a silver creek,
Lullaby, go to sleep.*

*Summer, she's a naughty child
Lullaby, lullaby
Throwin' stones, runnin' wild,
Lullaby.*

*Summer, you won't go to sleep—
Lullaby's don't make you sleep,
Then dance all night and I will sleep
But you'll be tired in the mornin'.*

A CRITIQUE OF LE PETIT SAMBO NOIR

Hoyt N. Duggan, Centenary College
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In every great work of art there are several levels of meaning. Beneath the first level of reference, the mere surface specifics, lies a vast reservoir of hidden meanings.

A careful reader of *Le Petit Sambo Noir* is struck at once by the conceptual images of blue and green. The little colored boy is said to have a coat of blue. This color is, of course, symbolic of the deadening and artificial influence of intellectualism. The green grass and trousers are symbolic of the mystical life-giving forces of nature. These forces are in a life-and-death struggle for domination in the character of Sambo, as is indicated by the close proximity of the trousers to the coat. It is significant that as the novel begins, the sky and the jacket are the dominant elements, as the fact that they are on top of any picture which we may have of Sambo indicates.

Later, as Sambo wanders into the jungle and is confronted by the tigers, themselves symbols of the cruelly impersonal forces of nature, he is forced to strip off both his intellectualism (the jacket) and somewhat unjustly, his virility (the trousers).

It is at this point that Sambo becomes a wounded hero. Like Nick Adams, Sambo is isolated and hurt. The lost trousers and jacket corroborate the theme of separation, the motif of lostness and chaos. Divorced from any means of finding reality, Sambo (disillusioned and naked) wanders aimlessly through the jungle in a seemingly fruitless quest of reality. He is Huck without the solace of the river.

Again Sambo encounters the tigers. This time, however, those impartial forces that had stripped him of hope and love and meaning—and clothing—are now engaged in a furious struggle. (It is perhaps not inappropriate to compare the fighting of the tigers with the storm in *Lear*.) At this moment Sambo achieves meaning and his moment of illumination, for as the tigers circle madly about the tree (this has obvious Freudian overtones, but I must leave some creative work to the reader), they melt themselves into tiger butter. This liquid ring of golden butter is symbolic of the fluidity of life and time and becomes a great primitive earth mother that will nourish her child.

This great novel, despite minor structural flaws, is one that will continue to be read and loved for generations. Its importance lies in the character of Sambo, who is an archetypal figure who appears again and again in western literature. Examples of the Sambo archetype are Othello, Jim in "*Huckleberry Finn*," Pip in "*Moby Dick*," and Porgy.

The novel is one of social protest. A powerful expression of the artist's revolt against the mechanized and soulless western society, it asserts proudly the dignity of the individual and castigates severely a degenerate society that overwhelms the individual.

Written in a detached, objective style, the novel might be called naturalistic, because the truly monumental character of Sambo is the product of natural laws working inexorably toward the final proud statement . . . "Let them go to school with us."



Bird

Dottie Brown '62

VOICE OF THE LITTLEST DEVIL

Lori Vink '65

Sin, sin, sin
 Some breathe it as the
 Breath of life
 Some think it is the
 Death of life
 A little gives some
 Zest to life—
 Sin, sin, sin .

And once an apple
 Upon a tree
 Brought Adam down upon
 His knee ,
 The Devil now owns
 Part of me—
 Sin, sin, sin .

An apple hanging on a tree
 I'd eaten two had it been me
 And out of Curiosity
 Discovered Sin—
 Sin, sin, sin.

THE RAVEN CROUCHES

Nancy R. Burch '62

Autumn's painted nails and cracking skin
so near
Summer's soothing breeze, sounding waves
grow dear
naked feet, wet grass, bodies mostly bare
sun, if you desired, shade if you preferred
passed through
cherished now
proud love, pure love
indifference
love fading, folding like the morning glories
recognition, desiring
indifference polished
essence undiscovered
passion wasted in reminiscences
thinning hair time left of course
really?
youth desired
at middle age
middle age desired
at sixty-two
any age mostly wasted little appreciated
until dong, tick, ring, chime
three . . . eleven
listen! please listen! oh—
the echo of the twelfth
the other chimes . . . I . . . wasn't . . . listening
lonely sounds, pleasant sights, lowly sights
turquoise skys, red nights lavender
all these emaciated images
loveless crowds, searching eyes, strangled existence
unseen
the raven crouches near
the dove seems dear finally
silent, invisible curtains close life off from life
(no, death from death)
parched lips open to whisper admiration,
or to explain a feeling of life
sorry
curtain closed



Gretchen Louft '62

Santa Darling

Judy Walsh '62

THE SCENE: THE INTERIOR OF A RAKISH COSMOPOLITAN APARTMENT, ACQUIRED RATHER THAN "DONE" IN A MANNER REFLECTING THE NATURE OF ITS INHABITANT, GWENDOLYN, A SLIM GIRL WITH RED HAIR, PURPLE SKIRT, GREEN SWEATER, STOCKING FEET, CARELESS; NOT BEAT. AT RISE, SHE IS SITTING STIFFLY AT ONE END OF A SOFA. AT THE OTHER END, SITTING STIFFLY, IS FREDDIE.

FREDDIE

Gwendolyn, that was a highly illogical statement.

GWENDOLYN

Well, you've never kissed me passionately, and I wish you would.

FREDDIE

I *feel* passion:

Your flame-swept coif doth sweep me high, aloft,
Though awed by space I needs must quell my lust.

There!

GWENDOLYN

It's not the same. Freddie, must you eternally speak in iambic pentameter?

FREDDIE

Gwendolyn, repetition dulls the brain, but since you have forced me into this crucible I shall be repetitive. Gwendolyn, I am not a man of means; henceforth, I must be a man of logic.

GWENDOLYN

Freddie, have a drink.

FREDDIE

I shall go to sleep.

GWENDOLYN

No you won't. I'll open a window, and put on Stravinsky.

FREDDIE

But all you have is *Rite of Spring*.

GWENDOLYN

I know.

FREDDIE

It's winter. It's *hailing* outside!

GWENDOLYN

I know, and besides that it's Christmas Eve.

FREDDIE

So. Put on some Bach.

GWENDOLYN

I *hate* Bach.

FREDDIE

You love Bach.

GWENDOLYN

I hate him. It's Christmas Eve. Freddie go home.

FREDDIE

I thought you were going to let me sleep here tonight . It's HAILING outside, Gwendolyn.

GWENDOLYN

No.

FREDDIE

If I have a drink, I won't even snore. Gwendolyn you're being narrow minded. My sleeping in your apartment is perfectly innocent.

GWENDOLYN

Exactly. What do you do on two drinks?

FREDDIE

Have experimental neuroses.

GWENDOLYN

Three?

FREDDIE

Throw up.

GWENDOLYN

(PUSHING HIM OUT DOOR) You'll have to walk down, remember. The elevator is broken.

FREDDIE

Gwendolyn, it's HAILING!

GWENDOLYN

Goodnight. When you come for breakfast, bring a quart of milk.

FREDDIE

(FROM OUTSIDE OF DOOR) Gwendolyn, I hate to do this, but I'M going to have to give you an ultimatum. I have been a means of extreme intellectual stimulation to you. I have tried, I have *exhausted* myself explaining to you the quantum theory, and the scientific method. And if after all that—and Proust too—you won't even let me sleep in your apartment when it would be perfectly innocent and it's hailing outside—well you can just—just— (HE SPUTTERS AND STOPS.)

GWENDOLYN

Get the kind with the cream on top.

(GWENDOLYN COMES BACK INTO THE ROOM, STANDS WITH HANDS ON HIPS A MOMENT, THEN SITS ON THE CHARTREUSE SOFA. SHE PULLS UP PURPLE SKIRT, TAKES OFF NYLON, LOOKS AT IT CRITICALLY, AND SEARCHES THE ROOM FOR A MINUTE. THEN SHE GOES TO THE BAR, PICKS UP A CORKSCREW, AND NAILS THE NYLON AT THE FOOT OF A RIDICULOUSLY MODERNISTIC FIREPLACE. SHE DISAPPEARS OFF RIGHT, RETURNING IN A MOMENT IN A GREEN SATIN ROBE. SHE SLINKS TO THE BAR THEN LEANS OVER, HANDS ON SHINS TO INSPECT ITS CONTENTS, AN EXTREMELY "UNVAMPISH" POSITION. SHE POURS TWO DRINKS STRAIGHT, TAKES A SIP OF ONE OF THEM. AND MAKES A WRY FACE. THEN SHE TAKES A DEEP BREATH, AND DOWNS HER DRINK. AS ON CUE, SANTA CLAUS FALLS DOWN CHIMNEY.)

SANTA CLAUS

Ho Ho Ho (THERE IS NO RESPONSE) I said, Ho Ho Ho

GWENDOLYN

Oh, god, not you too.

SANTA CLAUS

What's the matter?

GWENDOLYN

Ho. Ho. Ho. Alliteration.

SANTA CLAUS

You really can have no idea of how frustrating it is to be Santa Claus.

GWENDOLYN

I do.

SANTA CLAUS

Really?

GWENDOLYN

Yes. The self-service elevator is broken, so you had to resort to the chimney; an extremely outdated method.

SANTA CLAUS

That's not the half of it. That's not even a good *seventh* of it. Things change so much. Unexpectedly, you know. Last year when I came there was no furniture in this room but that awful chartreuse sofa. I must have been terribly clumsy, because I made more than the usual racket, and the young man sleeping there sat up and looked at me, and I can tell you Gwendolyn, there is nothing more disconcerting to a Santa Claus than a stare of that sort. It destroys all sorts of traditional illusions; so, I left.

GWENDOLYN

You should have stayed. That was only Freddie. I'd just moved in, and the only furniture I had at that time was the sofa, and Freddie.

SANTA CLAUS

Well, at least you've gotten rid of one of them. Was he your lover?

GWENDOLYN

My—? Oh, certainly not. He is an intellectual companion.

SANTA CLAUS

But since then you've changed your outlook.

GWENDOLYN

(REMEMBERING SEXY ROBE, DRINK) Yes, this year I'm going in for passion. (THEN IN A SULTRY, SEXY VOICE) Won't you change into something more comfortable?

SANTA CLAUS

This is all I've got. A man gets attached to his clothes.

GWENDOLYN

I know. Freddie has a perfectly rancid orange bathrobe that he won't get rid of. And he clashes with the drapes. Freddie doesn't believe in you.

SANTA CLAUS

Of course not. Freddie has several unfortunate mental blocks.

GWENDOLYN

Yes—that's it—mental blocks. I've been wondering. But then I don't believe in you either. It's just this drink. Usually I'm a very controlled person.

SANTA CLAUS

This is really wonderful. I've needed a conversation like this for a long time. May I sit down?

GWENDOLYN

Oh, of course. How inhospitable of me. Didn't you know this other drink was for you?

SANTA CLAUS

Oh, is it? That's part of my problem. Santa Clauses are supposed to know everything, and it's awfully complex.

GWENDOLYN

I imagine it is. Santa Claus, darling. (IN A HUSKY VOICE) You don't mind if I call you Santa Claus, darling, do you?

SANTA CLAUS

No. There's something very intimate about Christmas Eve anyway, Gwendolyn. Dear.

GWENDOLYN

(POURS HERSELF ANOTHER DRINK.) Well, cheers, (THEY DRINK.) Santa Claus, darling, there's something about you. I knew it from the very beginning. I've never met a man like you before.

SANTA CLAUS

Of course not.

GWENDOLYN

(CHANGING BACK TO FIRST TONE OF VOICE) You're not supposed to say that. You're supposed to say, "Gwendolyn, dear, I've never met a girl like you before either."

SANTA CLAUS

All right. Gwendolyn, dear, I've never met a girl like you before either.

GWENDOLYN

There. That's better. Why don't you put your head in my lap?

SANTA CLAUS

But it's not true.

GWENDOLYN

What isn't?

SANTA CLAUS

What you said I should say. You have no idea—absolutely no conception of how many girls in green satin negligees I've met at the foot of chimneys.

GWENDOLYN

Oh.

SANTA CLAUS

With one difference.

GWENDOLYN

Oh?

SANTA CLAUS

You're the only girl I've ever met before that's like you!

GWENDOLYN

Oh! ! !

SANTA CLAUS

You're the only girl that will let me talk about my problems.

GWENDOLYN

Is that what we're talking about?

SANTA CLAUS

You don't mind, do you?

GWENDOLYN

Well, actually, I had something else in mind.

SANTA CLAUS

(WITH A LEER) we'll get to that.

GWENDOLYN

IF you say so.

SANTA CLAUS

Gwendolyn, dear. You're a very rare and unusual sort of girl; the type of girl that a man doesn't find at the foot of a chimney *every* day of the week.

GWENDOLYN

I *am*?

SANTA CLAUS

Of course, I know it's hard for you to understand when Freddie won't even kiss you passionately—

GWENDOLYN

You were eavesdropping!

SANTA CLAUS

I confess. But as I was saying, you're a girl of extreme perceptivity, and unerring judgment. Which is why I've *chosen* you to help me with my problem.

GWENDOLYN

You *chose* me?

SANTA CLAUS

Of course. You don't think I'd drop down just any old chimney and discuss my Heart's secrets with just anybody, do you?

GWENDOLYN

I don't know .

SANTA CLAUS

Well, I'm telling you I wouldn't.

(DURING THE LAST FEW SPEECHES, GWENDOLYN HAS BEEN SCRUTINIZING SANTA CLAUS CLOSELY. SANTA CLAUS HAS BEEN TOO LOST IN HIS OWN DISCLOSURE TO REALIZE IT, BUT NOW HE STOPS, AND STAMPS HIS FOOT WITH UNSAINTLY VEHEMENCE.)

No, NO, NO! Gwendolyn, please don't look at me that way!

GWENDOLYN

(SLIGHTLY TAKEN ABACK) Why, Santa Claus, darling, you don't mind my staring at you *really*, do you? (CROUCHING ON KNEES) Or is it the tigress in me that frightens you—the unscrupulous *passion*!

SANTA CLAUS

I didn't think that was the way you were looking at me—I thought you were staring at me in a rather condescending manner. (HE POUTS)

GWENDOLYN

Well, I guess I was noticing that you looked sort-of, well, *underfed*. You have that tired, drawn, listless look. Not at all like the Santa Clauses I'm used to.

SANTA CLAUS

(GRIMACING) Here it comes.

GWENDOLYN

Not that I mind very much. I've always preferred the tall, poetic type—you know—the "misunderstood" ones. But truthfully, Santa Claus, Darling, you don't look like Santa Claus.

SANTA CLAUS

Oh! You have hit upon it—rather ruthlessly, I must say.

GWENDOLYN

Now don't get all upset. Just relax. Wait! I have an idea. If we're going to do this at all, we're going to do it properly. The sofa. Now, lie down; feet up, head down.

SANTA CLAUS

That sofa? (RELUCTANTLY)

GWENDOLYN

I guess there's always the bedroom.

SANTA CLAUS

No. I'd get distracted. (SETTLING HIMSELF). Is this the correct position?

GWENDOLYN

Fine. Now, tell me everything. Free your mind. Keep nothing from me.

SANTA CLAUS

(SITTING UP) Gwendolyn, I don't think I can go through with it. Can I? Can't I? It's this indecision that upsets me.

GWENDOLYN

Lie down. We must hurry and finish with your problem so we can get on to mine.

SANTA CLAUS

All right. I'll try. This sort of disclosure, as you know, is very painful—but I'll try. Picture this if you can. . . May I stand up?

GWENDOLYN

If it will help you. Freddie says that some of the best psycho-therapeutic cures are obtained by acting out one's repressions.

SANTA CLAUS

I thought Freddie was a poet.

GWENDOLYN

Well, he is, in a way. He's an amateur poet, an amateur psychiatrist, an amateur mystic. *Actually*, he works in the notions department of *Macy's*, but he's trying to broaden his horizons.

SANTA CLAUS

We're off the subject. I don't want to talk about Freddie; I want to talk about *me*.

GWENDOLYN

Okay. So, picture what?

SANTA CLAUS

The Automat, the subway, the notions department of *Macy's*—anything you choose. There are thousands of people mulling around, jostling up against each other—cantankerous old ladies and young ladies and middle aged ladies. And young, organized businessmen, and old stingy businessmen—all of them looking for Christmas in "Presents—under \$5—and imitation *ME's*, and worst of all the children—the children. They all look at me the same way and say the same thing.

GWENDOLYN

What do they say?

SANTA CLAUS

Wait. It's coming—It's coming. In a subway night before last, there was a little boy with his mother. And do you know what he did?

GWENDOLYN

What?

SANTA CLAUS

He came up and poked me in the stomach, and pulled my beard. And he said, "You're not *really* Santa Claus"!

GWENDOLYN

Oh, dear. How shattering!

SANTA CLAUS

And Gwendolyn—the worst is coming—I'm not. I'm not Santa Claus at all.

GWENDOLYN

Oh!

SANTA CLAUS

I'm second Vice-President in charge of YO-YO's—but I'm on my way. I'm well on my way.

GWENDOLYN

Of course you are. All that's wrong with you is that you have a bad self-image.

SANTA CLAUS

A what?

GWENDOLYN

A bad self-image. You underestimate yourself. Why I'll bet in two hundred more years or so, you'll be FIRST Vice-President in charge of yo-yo's, and then on to ice-skates, and from there to doll houses—and it's hard to tell where else. There's plenty of room for expansion.

SANTA CLAUS

(GETTING IN THE MOOD) The Old Man really does have confidence in me. To be Second Vice-President in charge of Yo-Yo's, one has to have a certain subtlety of taste—a real feel for rhythm—and color!

GWENDOLYN

When you come right down to it you're actually *indispensible*!

SANTA CLAUS

I guess I am.

GWENDOLYN

You only needed someone to prove to you that you exist.

SANTA CLAUS

Well?

GWENDOLYN

Well?

SANTA CLAUS

Do I?

GWENDOLYN

Scientifically you don't. And I've probably just drunk too much Christmas brandy. But still, your boots have left black marks on my sofa. And now you're standing in the middle of my rug. And I'm wondering if you've forgotten the original plan of the evening.

SANTA CLAUS

I'm sure it's time for me to be going.

GWENDOLYN

Santa Claus, darling, you can't leave me this way. I need somebody to prove that *I* exist.

SANTA CLAUS

Oh, you do, Gwendolyn. On my word as a spirit, you exist as much as any sweet young thing I've ever met.

GWENDOLYN

Then why won't Freddie treat me that way? Santa Claus, I am highly frustrated.

SANTA CLAUS

Ahem, *yes*.

GWENDOLYN

And I can think of no better way for us both to prove that we're here.

SANTA CLAUS

Gwendolyn, I don't think that's a very good idea.

GWENDOLYN

Don't I appeal to you?

SANTA CLAUS

Of course you do. You have red hair, and red is *my* color. You have intelligence and a sharp wit, and—

GWENDOLYN

Stop. You said that before. And so did Freddie, come to think of it.

SANTA CLAUS

Well, you are an intellectual girl.

GWENDOLYN

I don't want Freddie to say that I'm intellectual.

SANTA CLAUS

This problem is more common than you'd think.

GWENDOLYN

I want him to say that I'm warm, and desirable, and passionate. I want him to buy me jewels, and perfume—and—to blow in my ear.

SANTA CLAUS

But he won't?

GWENDOLYN

But he won't.

SANTA CLAUS

Well, you *are* all those things, but I can't prove it to you.

GWENDOLYN

Why not?

SANTA CLAUS

Because of a minute fact which I briefly forgot.

GWENDOLYN

What?

SANTA CLAUS

Gwendolyn, I'm married.

GWENDOLYN

How naive can you get! You know as well as I do that that doesn't make any difference in our time.

SANTA CLAUS

But I'm not *in* your time. This is different. When you've been married to a woman for almost seven hundred years, you get attached to her.

GWENDOLYN

I wasn't counting on your having this sort of emotional dependence. Wait a minute! What did you do about all those others?

SANTA CLAUS

What others?

GWENDOLYN

The other girls in green satin negligees.

SANTA CLAUS

I'm afraid I exaggerated a bit. There weren't really that many girls. There was one landlady in curlers, and a flowered wrapper. I advised her to go back to her third husband. There was one rather prococious 12-year-old. I advised her to try older men.

GWENDOLYN

So, advise *me*. You're well adjusted now, and I've tried out everything else.

SANTA CLAUS

Isn't there anything else you want for Christmas? I have a very original authentic, reproduction of the Mona Lisa—

GWENDOLYN

No. You know what I want.

SANTA CLAUS

There must be something we can salvage from Freddie.

GWENDOLYN

Not much. Freddie has a few endearing qualities, but he's not at all romantic.

SANTA CLAUS

Maybe you started out wrong. That's often the problem. Maybe you didn't confront him with your feminine potentialities.

GWENDOLYN

I guess that's possible.

SANTA CLAUS

If we're going to do this at all, we're going to do it properly. The sofa—now—lie down, feet up, head down.

GWENDOLYN

You're getting better and better at this.

SANTA CLAUS

It's amazing what a little self-confidence can do. Now, Gwendolyn, tell me everything—free your mind, hold nothing back.

GWENDOLYN

All right. Freddie is the cousin of a good friend of my mother—Aunt Eloise, we call her, though she's not really in the family. When I came to the city she thought I should have some one to protect me from the kind of men I wanted to meet—men with beards and mistresses who write risque poetry—you know the type.

SANTA CLAUS

Oh, yes, very well. When I was 105, or six, I was a scoundrel myself.

GWENDOLYN

So Freddie protected me. On our first date we went to a lecture on the invertebrates. On the second, we went to a lecture on the value of viewing sex objectively. Then I moved in here, we stopped having dates at all. He became a fixture—like a coffee pot. Wait—one important thing! One night we went to one of those torrid foreign movies, actresses with terrific décolletage and not much else. I think Freddie must have been, well, *moved* by it, because when we came back here he grabbed m, and did attempt a kiss. But he wasn't too good at it. He got embarrassed, tripped over the end-table, and broke his collarbone.

SANTA CLAUS

What did you do?

GWENDOLYN

What could I do? I picked him up.

SANTA CLAUS

Now truthfully, Gwendolyn, was that your first impulse?

GWENDOLYN

Not emotionally. But logically it was.

SANTA CLAUS

Forget logic—just for once. How did you *feel*?

GWENDOLYN

Surprised at first. And then—then I felt *motherly*! That's disastrous, isn't it? But he looked so pitiful. He's too thin anyway, and his glasses fell off, and he looked so—helpless.

(IF THIS WERE A CARTOON, A LIGHT BULB WOULD APPEAR OVER HIS HEAD) What time is it?

GWENDOLYN

This is no time to ask a question like that.

SANTA CLAUS

Is it still Christmas Eve?

GWENDOLYN

(LOOKS AT WATCH) Just barely.

SANTA CLAUS

I don't know why I didn't think of this before, and as second Vice-President of Yo-Yo's, I'm not sure I'm entitled to this privilege—but for you, beautiful, desirable, delectable Gwendolyn, I shall try?

GWENDOLYN

What are you going to do?

SANTA CLAUS

A feat requiring great concentration, and strength.

GWENDOLYN

Shall I leave?

SANTA CLAUS

No. Stay. Sit on the sofa and talk about your ideal man.

GWENDOLYN

What shall I say?

SANTA CLAUS

Surely that's not a problem.

GWENDOLYN

All right, I'll try. He's tall—and dark—with brown eyes. He's got to have sex-appeal. He must be just smart enough to be smarter than me. No repressions. No neuroses. He must sweep me off my feet and still be there when I pick myself up. He must be clean, thoughtful, trustworthy and, wicked enough to be interesting . . . I think he should be like a bigger Freddie, minus mental blocks.

SANTA CLAUS

Is that all?

GWENDOLYN

One more thing. I think it would be lovely if he had a beard. Just a small beard.

SANTA CLAUS

And now, Gwendolyn, we shall see.

GWENDOLYN

(STRETCHING OUT LUXURIOUSLY) A very small beard would tickle so nicely.

(THERE IS A POUNDING AT THE DOOR)

FREDDIE

Gwendolyn, let me in this very minute! It's midnight, and I hear a man's voice in there!

GWENDOLYN

Freddie?

FREDDIE

Of course it is.

GWENDOLYN

Freddie, I can't let you in. I'm not dressed.

(ROARING) You're not dressed! And there's a man in there! Open the door or I'll knock it down!

(WITH ONE FELL BLOW, HE DOES THIS. GWENDOLYN STANDS MOUTH AGAPE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FLOOR. WE SEE A BOOT DISAPPEARING UP THE CHIMNEY. FREDDIE IS MIRACULOUSLY CHANGED. MINUS GLASSES, WOEBEGONE AIR. HE HAS ALL THE AFOREMENTIONED CHARACTERISTICS. HE IS A MASTER-PIECE OF A MAN)

Where is he?

GWENDOLYN

Oh, Freddie! (SHE IS ROOTED TO THE SPOT; SHE IS AWED.)

FREDDIE

Where is he, I say? In the bedroom? The closet? The kitchen?

(HE QUICKLY CHECKS ALL THESE PLACES)

GWENDOLYN

He's up the chimney.

FREDDIE

I could swear I heard a man's voice in this room . . . It doesn't matter. You'll never have time to think of another man while I'm around. Come here.

(HE KISSES HER PASSIONATELY)

GWENDOLYN

Freddie, what has happened to you?

FREDDIE

What do you mean? I was just walking down 58th Street, and suddenly I realized that I adore you, so here I am.

GWENDOLYN

Just don't blow in my ear . . .

FREDDIE

I *will* blow in your ear.

(HE DOES)

GWENDOLYN

Oh, your beard tickles so nicely.

(SHE GIGGLES)

FREDDIE

My beard?

(HE GINGERLY TOUCHES HIS CHIN)

That's strange. I didn't have one fifteen minutes ago.

(HE MOVES HIS ARMS UP AND DOWN)

And this coat is too tight. And my glasses? Where are my glasses? I don't understand. I can see perfectly.

GWENDOLYN

Never mind. Why don't you change into your rancid orange bathrobe; then you can put your head on my lap.

FREDDIE

Gwendolyn, you never looked at me in that way before—so seductive. Come here and let me kiss you passionately again.

(SHE DOES; THEY DO . . . AFTER RECOVERY SHE SINKS TO THE SOFA. FREDDIE WALKS TO THE FIREPLACE)

I brought you a few presents that I sort of "found." Here's some perfume, and some ruby earrings, and an emerald necklace, and,

(HE TURNS)

a diamond ring.

GWENDOLYN

Freddie, darling, you shouldn't have.

FREDDIE

Confidentially, Gwendolyn, dear, I don't think I did. Where did you get the milk? You didn't go out in the hail did you?

GWENDOLYN

No, I—Yes, I—

FREDDIE

There's a note on it. "I couldn't have done it without you."

GWENDOLYN

Done what?

Freddie, darling, it's Christmas. Isn't that enough?

FREDDIE
(HE'S BENDING TO KISS HER)

Gwendolyn, dear, the strangest thing happened to me tonight.

GWENDOLYN

Really?

FREDDIE

Yes. I came back here and had forgotten the elevator was supposed to be broken, and it worked! Gwendolyn, it *worked*!

GWENDOLYN

Freddie, that was a highly illogical statement.

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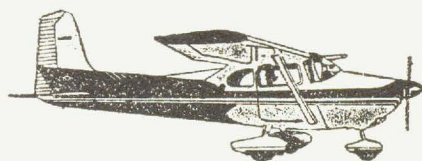
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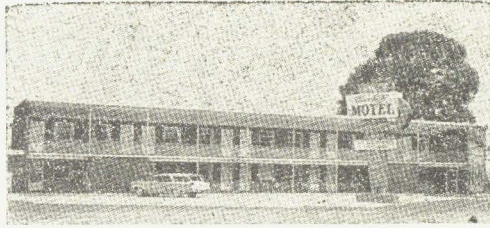
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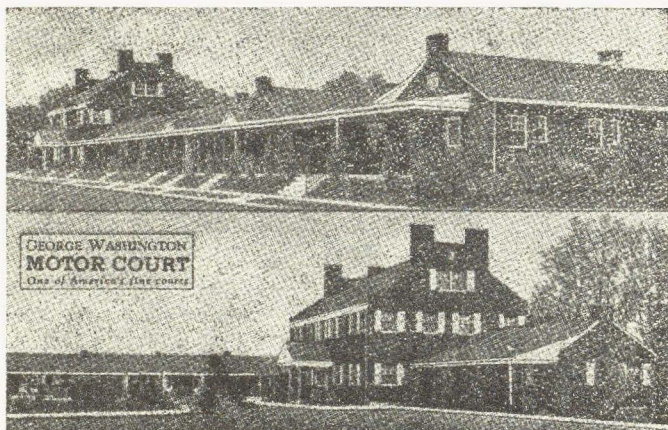
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